

NEWS RELEASE



STATE OF ALABAMA
Department of Industrial
Relations
News For Immediate Release
Contact: Debbie Herbert at
334/242-8609

Alabama's 2005 Unemployment Rate is Lowest in Seven Years

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA, March 3, 2006 Alabama's unemployment rate of 3.8 percent in January was slightly up from the revised December jobless rate of 3.6 percent, but was well below the 4.4 percent recorded a year ago. January's rate represented 81,576 unemployed persons, compared to 77,300 unemployed in December 2005, and 94,448 in January 2005.

The comparable national unemployment rate for January was 4.7 percent, down slightly from December's rate of 4.9 percent, and below the year-ago rate of 5.2 percent.

"The official average unemployment rate for 2005 was just 4.0 percent," says Phyllis Kennedy, director of the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. "This compares favorably to the national 2005 unemployment rate of 5.1 percent. For Alabama, 2005 marked the lowest annual average unemployment rate since 1998 when the average was 3.9 percent."

Over the year, there was a net gain of 47,200 jobs in wage and salary employment. The majority of the annual growth occurred in professional and business services (+11,500) followed by manufacturing (+8,800); leisure and hospitality (+7,200); construction (+5,800); educational and health services (+5,800); trade (wholesale and retail) transportation and utilities (+3,500); government (+2,600); financial activities (+1,100); natural resources and mining (+700); and other services (+300). The only sector to record a decline over the year was in information (-100).

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County unemployment rates, Metropolitan Area Unemployment Rates, and an Alabama map of county unemployment rates, are available at: <http://dir.alabama.gov>. Click on "Alabama Labor Market Information Division" under "Quick Links" and follow prompts.